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that her judgment is entitled to respect and deference; or did he *certainly* believe that she is infallible? If the latter, then his belief was founded on motives utterly inadequate to produce such an assurance. Motives of CREDIBILITY are only *probable* grounds of assent, and, therefore, cannot infallibly prove any conclusion, and consequently not the infallibility of the Church. The degree of assent—that is, of rational assent—must be proportioned to the degree of evidence. An *infallible conclusion* cannot be drawn from *probable premises*. But if Dr. Milner meant that these motives of credibility produced in him only a general kind of belief in the Church, not amounting to a complete assurance of her infallibility, then he could have no infallible certainty that the passages of Scripture which he adduces really bear the meaning which they must bear in order that the conclusion which he seeks to draw from them may follow. He says, indeed (though he well knew that there are no passages in Scripture the meaning of which has been more contested, and even between Romish writers themselves), that the passages are *clear and plain*. That is to say, they seem to him to be clear and plain. But what he wants is *infallible* certainty as to their meaning. His private judgment cannot, of course, yield him this; neither can he derive it from the interpretation of the Church, because by hypothesis her infallibility is as yet unproved. If, then, Dr. Milner *really* believed the infallibility of the Church by the “analysis,” or process of reasoning, above stated, he either did so on utterly insufficient grounds, or else he palmed off upon himself the vulgar sophism of *petitio principii*. He has not succeeded in escaping from the enchanted circle.

Dr. Milner, in order to render his “analysis” more convincing, adds an illustration, which, however, unfortunately for him, is not one whit more logical than the analysis itself. It is a very favourite illustration with Romish divines, and Dr. Wiseman has reproduced it in his Lectures. “To elucidate,” says Dr. Milner, “this matter more clearly, I will suppose myself on a remote part of the island [England], when a personage, with all the insignia and other moral evidence of his being the king’s delegate, presents himself to me, and delivers me a letter, which he assures me was written to me by his Majesty. My first care, in common prudence, is to ascertain the character and credibility of the messenger. These being made out to my entire satisfaction, I open the royal letter, in which, among other things, I read as follows:—“The bearer of this letter is fully informed of our royal meaning and will, as to the contents of it, and of everything relating to your duty and our service.” You will, therefore, give the same credit to his declarations as if they were personally given you by ourselves.” Having perused this passage of the letter, my respect for the messenger cannot but increase, though at first I believed it to come from the king on his testimony.” In this illustration, the ambassador is, of course, the Church, and the letter the Scriptures. Now, let us admit for the sake of argument that the divine mission of the Church, i.e., the Church of Rome, is as clearly authenticated as the mission of the ambassador is supposed to be; and that her credentials as the authorised bearer, not only of the written, but also the unwritten, commands of God are unquestionable: though, it must be observed, this is more than we are called upon to admit, because, according to Romish principles, *no one can tell what is Scripture* except the Church herself inform him; so that, we must trust *wholly* to the Church herself that what she puts into our hands is a written communication from God at all; waiving, however, this also, and granting moreover (what, of course, we do not admit) that the written document does not contain the whole will of God, but that several most important matters must be communicated orally by the Church, the all-important question arises—How are we to *know* what the document contains? According to the invariable representation of Romish writers themselves, it is couched in such obscure and ambiguous language that it is absolutely impossible for us to make out with any degree of certainty what it means. The only person able to explain it is the bearer herself. She alone has the true key to the cipher. We ask her to decipher the document for us. She tells us that it contains statements to the following effect:—“The bearer of this document is fully informed of our meaning and will, as to the contents of it, and of everything relating to your duty and our service, you will, therefore, give the same credit to her declarations as if they were personally given you by ourselves.” We look at the document, and study it as carefully as we can, and we tell her that we are unable to see anything like these statements. She replies, that is of no consequence; I am the authorized decipherer and interpreter of the king’s letters. But, we rejoin, how are we to be certain that you give us the true meaning? Because, the document says that I am qualified and authorized to do so. And how are we to be sure that the document states this? Because I say so. After such a satisfactory explanation our respect for the bearer, to use Dr. Milner’s words, “cannot but increase.” We at first believed the Scriptures to come from God on her testimony; we now believe her to be infallible, because she herself tells us that these Scriptures declare her to be so. Had Dr. Milner remembered that, to make his illustration worth anything, the letter should have been written in a cipher to

The traditional doctrines not found in Scripture.

which the ambassador alone had the key, he probably would not have thought it worth while to “elucidate” his “analysis” by means of it.

So much for Dr. Milner’s attempt at escaping from the enchanted circle. Others, especially the modern school of Romish divines, fairly give up the *logic* altogether. Thus, De Maistre<sup>d</sup> says, “The Catholic Church is not in its nature argumentative; it believes without disputing; for faith is a belief through love, and love does not reason!” Dr. Wilberforce confesses that the Scripture proof of infallibility is a *vicious circle*, though he thinks that the argument still has weight as an *argumentum ad hominem* against Protestants, who already admit the inspiration of Scripture.

The last method which we shall notice of attempting to escape from the difficulty, is by a kind of mystic transcendentalism—a favourite mode of proceeding with many persons who find reason and logic troublesome things to deal with. It is asserted that individual Christians acquire the conviction of the Church’s infallibility by a species of non-descript *spiritual tact* or *intuitive perception*. Some even go so far as to maintain that this unerring intuition is communicated in and through the sacrament of baptism! Compared with this, the extravagance of some Protestant sects who lay claim to special divine illumination is a mere trifle.

Roman Catholic reader! The next time you have an opportunity, ask your parish priest whether he has ever heard of VALENTIAN’S ENCHANTED CIRCLE, and if he can tell you the mode of escaping from it, if any, which he learned at Maynooth.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters meant for publication should be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-street, and the real name and address given, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for good faith.

We earnestly request our correspondents, both Protestants and Roman Catholics, to limit the length of their communications, when possible, and not in any case to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber.

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## The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, MARCH 18, 1858.

DURING the first year of our labours, on the 1st October, 1852, the benefits of a jubilee commenced in our good city of Dublin, pursuant to an allocation of Pope Pius IX., bearing date the 21st day of November, 1851. Some of our readers may, perhaps, remember that auspicious event, even though they may not have been fortunate enough to participate in its benefits.

We have just learned from a Pastoral of Dr. Joseph Dixon, who, to the great vexation of the *Tablet*, styles himself by the grace of God and favour of the Holy See, *Archbishop*, &c.,\* that his Holiness the Pope has, by a similar encyclical letter, pronounced in secret Consistory at Rome, on the 25th September, 1857, granted like favours to all Christendom, which he, Dr. Dixon (*Archbishop*, &c.), has rather cruelly (considering what he must believe to be the invaluable blessings so conferred) postponed the enjoyment of in Ireland from the said 25th September, 1857, till half a-year afterwards—viz., the Feast of our glorious Apostle, St. Patrick, on the 17th March, the very day of the publication of our present number. Cardinal Wiseman has not treated the good (Roman) Catholics of England with much greater consideration; for we have also in the same number of the *Tablet* now before us a copy of the *Lenten Indult and Proclamation of Jubilee*, signed N. Card. Wiseman, bearing date 2nd February, 1858, in which his eminence promulgates, that by virtue of the powers vested in him by the above-mentioned allocation of the 25th September last, he has appointed “the period

<sup>d</sup> Du Pape, Lib. 1. ch. 1.

\* The *Tablet* of Saturday last, 13th March, instant, is exceedingly irate with the *Rambler* for calling the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill a *theoretical* grievance, and with the *Weekly Register* for stating that “as Catholics in some respects we may possibly be the better for it,” while at the very same time the Primate of Ireland and Apostolic Delegate, in a Pastoral Letter to the Clergy and Faithful, feels himself obliged by that Act to renounce the title by virtue of which he exercises his authority over them, and to style himself *Archbishop*, &c.”

commencing with Ash Wednesday and ending with Low Sunday, both inclusive, for giving the jubilee in (what he calls) this our diocese of Westminster.”

We are informed by the same document that “a jubilee is a period during which the Holy See, by virtue of its Apostolic powers, *throws open the treasure house of spiritual graces* by granting a plenary indulgence in form of jubilee, applicable to the faithful departed.”

Is it not enough to make any one, who believes it possible that any of his departed friends may be at this time suffering the torments of purgatory, shudder, to think that when the Pope was kind enough, so far back as September last, to throw open the treasure house of spiritual graces, of which he holds the keys as the successor of St. Peter! for the benefit of the poor souls in purgatory, that Nicholas Cardinal Wiseman and Joseph Dixon (*Archbishop*, &c.) should have been so hard-hearted as to withhold that plenary indulgence, which would instantly free them from the torture of their prison-house, for six long months after they had the power of releasing them! Why did they not, if they had a spark of feeling, avail themselves of the power conferred on them by the Pope, the very first moment that it was possible for them to exercise it. We look upon these prelates as either disbelievers in the Pope’s power to grant such blessings, or to be infinitely greater traitors to the cause of humanity than men who would allow whole families of their fellow-creatures to be burnt alive in a conflagration, while the escape ladders were in their hands, if they would only place them against the building, and allow the unfortunates to make use of them.

Will any of our respected Roman Catholic correspondents or readers tell us how it is possible to avoid such a conclusion? Supposing, however, that there be any benefit whatever in these jubilees, we cannot but congratulate our Roman Catholic friends on a great improvement in the frequency of such proofs of the Pope’s benevolence in modern times.

Originally, it is known to most of our readers, that the period of 100 years was allowed to elapse between successive jubilees.

For 1200 years, indeed, no Pope ever granted them at all, and we believe it was Pope Boniface VIII., who, in the year 1300, first decreed that in every centennial year those who should devoutly visit the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome should receive a plenary indulgence. The vast crowds, however, who resorted thither in that year, A.D. 1300, brought such untold wealth to that city—every house being, as it were, of necessity converted into an inn—that the citizens of Rome were too impatient of reaping a similar harvest again, to wait so long as the centenary period of A.D. 1400. Accordingly, a little before the year 1350 very specious arguments were urged on the then Pope Clement VI., who was reminded that if jubilees were held only every 100 years, the shortness of human life is such, that numbers would be born after the end of one jubilee, and die before the commencement of another, without getting the benefit of either. Clement accordingly ordained that jubilees should be held in future every 50 years.

Subsequently Pope Urban VI., either advancing in humanity with the spirit of the times, or urged onwards by the eagerness of the lodging-house keepers and shopkeepers of Rome to accelerate another golden harvest, ordained that jubilees should be held in future three times in a century; and afterwards Pope Paul II. reduced the period of their celebration to 25 years, which Pius IX. has still more graciously, yielding to the onward spirit of the times, reduced in practice to 6 years, the previous jubilee having been granted, as we have seen, in 1851, and the present one (though somewhat tardily promulgated

in these countries) having been bestowed in 1857. The practical question still, however, remains—(a question in which, surely, all Roman Catholic Christendom is deeply concerned)—why should these plenary indulgences, in the form of a jubilee, be *restricted* to even the comparatively short period of 6 or 7 years? Why should the treasury of spiritual blessings, of which the key is in the pope's hands, to open whenever he pleases, be ever shut? Verily, the *power of the keys* seems to be in no very good keeping, and might much better be placed in the hands of the Humane Society, than in those of a man who, affecting to be Vicar-General of Christ on earth, shows so little of the spirit of his Divine Master, who always went about doing good, and relieving the wants, spiritual and temporal, of all those who were "faithful" believers in His divine mission.

To prevent the possibility of committing any error in our judgment, or mistake as to the doctrine in question, we have just opened a work of high practical authority on the subject, printed by R. Grace and Son, 45, Capel-street, Dublin, entitled "Indulgences granted by Sovereign Pontiffs to the Faithful, collected by a member of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences in Rome, translated into English with the permission of Superiors." The definition of an indulgence is thus given in page v. :—

"An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment which generally remains due to sins already forgiven in the sacrament of penance, as to the guilt and eternal punishment. This remission is made by the application of the merits and satisfactions which are contained in the treasures of the Church. These treasures are the accumulations of the spiritual goods arising from the infinite merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, with the superabundant merits and satisfactions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the holy martyrs, and of the other saints, which ultimately derive their efficacy from the merits and satisfactions of Christ, who is the only mediator of redemption. These CELESTIAL TREASURES, as they are called by the Council of Trent, are committed by the Divine bounty to the dispensation of the Church, the sacred spouse of Christ, and are the ground and matter of indulgences. They are infinite in reference to the merits of Christ, and cannot, therefore, be ever exhausted."

We take the description of a jubilee from an equally authentic source<sup>b</sup> :—

"A jubilee signifies a plenary indulgence in its most ample form, granted at different periods by the sovereign pontiff to those who, either residing in the city of Rome or visiting it, perform there the *visitations of the churches* and other prescribed works of piety, prayer, fasting, and alms deeds, with confession and communion, which are always enjoined for the giving of this indulgence, in order to facilitate the return of sinners to God by the last-mentioned exercises of religion. Most extensive powers are accorded by the supreme pontiff to all approved ministers of the sacrament of penance, a principal object of which indulgence is not only to encourage Christians to a closer union with, and a livelier sense of their dependence, in spiritual matters, on the *supreme pontiff*, who governs them as Christ's vicar on earth, but principally to induce them, by holding out *every possible encouragement to pray to God*, and perform works of piety in those places and under those circumstances which shall be most acceptable to God, and most conducive to their own spiritual advantage."

Let us see now how far the *jubilee* affords every possible "encouragement to pray to God." Cardinal Wiseman annexes to his Pastoral the following

#### CONDITIONS FOR GAINING THE JUBILEE.

"1st—A contrite and sincere confession of sin, and sacramental absolution (that is, to and by the priest); for which purpose, it is subsequently stated, 'that the clergy are to have the fullest powers of the confessional during the period.'

"2nd—The worthy and devout receiving of the blessed Eucharist.

"3rd—A visit to three churches, or three visits to one.

"4th—At each visit to pray for a *short space* for the exaltation and prosperity of Holy Mother Church and of the Apostolic See; for the *uprooting* of heresy; and for the peace and concord of Christian (i.e., of course, Roman Catholic) princes, and the peace and unity of the whole Christian (Roman Catholic) people.

"5th—To give, first, an alms to the poor, and, second, to contribute towards 'the propagation of the faith;' for which distinct object an alms-chest, legibly labelled, and

<sup>b</sup> Instructions and Devotions for the 40 hours' adoration ordered in the Churches in Dublin during the Jubilee of 1852, published with the approbation of the Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, James Duffy, 7, Wellington-quay, Dublin, 1852.

pointed out by the priest reading this pastoral, shall be set aside in each church.

"6th—To fast one day.

"On observance of these conditions the holy father grants the most plenary indulgence, in form of jubilee, applicable to the faithful departed."

The conditions expressed in Dr. Dixon's pastoral are substantially the same, though somewhat differently worded; the 4th and 5th are "to give *some* alms to the poor," and "to give a pious donation to the funds of the Propagation of the Faith, according to the devotion of each." The poor are in both documents named; but the grand object seems to be to *pray* for a *short space* for the exaltation of the Church, and the rooting out of heresies, and to fill with devotion (that is liberal) donations the coffers of the Propaganda. And this is in practice what in theory is said to be *principally* designed to hold out every *possible encouragement to pray to God*. Is it not manifest to every intelligent mind that the whole affair is merely a *pious fraud* to *cheat* mankind into virtue, or rather the virtue of submission to the Holy See, and hatred of heretics? and that if the real object were to relieve souls of "the faithful departed" from the pains of purgatory, no pope, unless he were a wicked and inhuman tyrant, could keep shut that "inexhaustible treasury of spiritual blessings" which is at all times at his disposal to relieve them. We have in former volumes shown that previous to the time of Thomas Aquinas, A.D. 1220, indulgences were accounted *pious frauds* by very learned and pious Roman Catholics, though Thomas Aquinas somewhat naively rejects their opinion, "because it is, in plain terms, to make the Church guilty of a notorious cheat!" as we firmly believe it to be.<sup>c</sup> The only other observation we shall make at present on these contemporaneous pastorals is, that in the annexed dispensations for Lent, in 1858, Cardinal Wiseman is much more liberal than Dr. Dixon in his *indulgences* in continued comforts which may be enjoyed by the faithful without breaking the rules.

John Bull is not quite so used to meagre diet as Paddy, and therefore the use of *dripping* and *lard*, as well as *cheese*, is allowed to the former, while no such liberty is given to the latter. As far as cheese goes, perhaps it is no great privation in Ireland; but to keep poor Paddy from the *dripping* or *lard*, if he could get it, does seem to us rather hard, and worthy of reconsideration by the Most Rev. Archbishop, &c.

We subjoin the *dispensations*, for the benefit of all those who desire to avail themselves of them, though we own that we find it hard to understand the theory of these dispensations. If cheese, lard, and dripping are really impediments to a Christian in his heavenly course, why should bishops give dispensations allowing their flocks to gratify their palates at the expense of their soul's interests?

According to Cardinal Wiseman—

"1. Flesh meat is allowed at the single meal of those who are bound to fast, &c. On Sundays even those who are bound to fast may eat flesh meat at their discretion. (*We trust not gluttonously.*)

"2. Eggs are allowed at the single meal, on all days except Ash Wednesday, the three last days in Holy Week.

"3. Cheese under same restrictions.

"4. The use of dripping or lard is permitted at dinner and collation, on all days except Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

"On those days, Sundays included, whenever flesh meat is allowed, fish is not permitted at the same meal."

✠ "N. CARDINAL WISEMAN."

#### DR. DIXON'S DISPENSATIONS.

"1. Flesh meat is allowed on all Sundays, and, with the exception of the first and last weeks, it is allowed once on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

"2. Flesh meat allowed on the feast of St. Patrick.

"3. Eggs allowed at the single meal, except on Wednesdays and Fridays of the first and last week, and on Fridays of the weeks of Lent.

"4. White meats are prohibited on Ash Wednesday

<sup>c</sup> See CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. II. p. 6, January, 1858.

<sup>d</sup> See Tablet of 13th February, 1858.

and on the Wednesday and Friday of Holy Week. On those days whenever flesh meat is allowed, fish is not permitted at the same meal.

✠ "JOSEPH DIXON."

We abstain from commenting on this sad burlesque, which is made in too many cases the substitute for that religion of the heart which can alone make man fit for the inheritance of the Saints in Light.

## Correspondence.

### ON PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—The able article in your last number on "Private Judgment," which I suspect is from the pen of Archbishop Whately, has induced me, rooted and grounded as I am in the faith of the holy Catholic Church, to reconsider the great subject of infallibility as held and taught since the days of our Lord and His Apostles. And first permit me to say a few words with respect to "private judgment," which Protestants seem to glory in as their exclusive privilege, and which they suppose no Roman Catholic dares to exercise for himself. In this they are grievously mistaken, and I for one fully recognize the *right*, the *duty*, aye, and the *necessity* of private judgment, but under reasonable restrictions and within proper limitations. If a man arrive at the absurd conclusion that there are *three* Gods, truly and numerically; surely no Protestant *ought* to say you have a *right* to your private opinion, though I think you very wrong. I will go farther, and admit no man has a *right* to his opinion unless it be one capable of being sustained by proof and sufficient evidence, and, to use the words of Locke, no proposition should be entertained with greater assurance than the proofs it is built upon will warrant. Let us take the case of the venerable Father Newman to illustrate what I wish to write on private judgment. He was once a member of the Anglican communion, and when satisfied of the falsity of its teachings he came over to the Church of Rome. Now, in doing so, his very *first step* was an act of *private judgment*. He saw it written in God's word, Matt., 28, 20—John, xiv. 16, 17, and xvi. 13, that Christ was to be with His Church *all* days to the end of the world, and that the Paraclete was to teach her *all* truth; and having from these and other passages concluded that an infallible Church *must* be somewhere on earth, he, in the exercise of his private judgment, resolved on attaching himself to that Church which alone *claimed* infallibility, and which alone *gives marks and tokens* to the world that it is the only infallible Church of Christ, viz., unity, catholicity, apostolicity, and sanctity. But once he joined this Church on sufficient evidence of its infallibility, there his private judgment ended; quoad, the consideration of its teaching, private judgment was no longer *necessary*; *doubt* is not possible where belief in infallibility is established. It is not correct to say that "if we decide on this (infallibility), then we may take all the rest of our opinions on *trust from the priest*." Every Catholic knows and admits that the pastors and prelates of his Church are fallible, and that any of them may fall into heresies, and, consequently, be deceived, but that the *whole* Church should be deceived and fall into error he believes to be impossible—Matthew, 16, 18. Surely, any man of sense, when about to undertake a voyage, would exercise his private judgment in selecting a good ship, skilful captain, &c.; and any one sick would, in the same way, choose a good physician, and "if a number of persons tell us that the captain is incompetent, and the physician we are about to employ a quack, we shall do well to look very sharp before we entrust ourselves to them without reserve." But I deny the justness of the application of this analogy to the subject of infallibility. It does not surely follow, that *because* the Eastern Church and the English Church, &c., reject the dogma of infallibility, that, therefore, we are in the position of those who are cautioned against employing an unskilful sea captain for a voyage, or a quack in case of sickness. My answer is, if half the world told me my captain or my physician were unskilful, or that I was wrong in entrusting myself to his care, I would not regard it for an instant. Why? Because God has told me to *hear the Church*, and, through His Apostle, that it is the pillar and ground of the truth. My captain is Christ; ergo, I can't err in following Him. My physician is Christ; ergo, I can't do wrong when implicitly doing what he prescribes. My ship is the vessel of that Church which He purchased with His blood, and which will infallibly conduct me to the haven of eternal rest. The human mind longs for rest, and there can be no true peace till the soul rests in the ark of truth. Protestants variorum creeds cannot possibly give peace or rest,

"As long as words a different sense will bear,  
And each may be his own interpreter,  
Our airy faith will no foundation find;  
The world's a weathercock for every wind."

I have been in most of the Protestant churches in this city, and in no two of them have I heard the *same sound*; and if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? One clergyman preaches